

All these sentences have apostrophes missing. Some are omissions (contractions), some possession. Decide where the apostrophe belongs.

1. My best friends sister is called Jodie.

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2. I havent got my homework.

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3. Id like some coffee and cake.

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4. Kims dance lessons are the best.

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5. Henris goal on Saturday was brilliant.

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6. There werent any eggs left after Jamie dropped the box.

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7. "Youre my best friend," said Harry.

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8. Judys car isnt very good, its always breaking down.

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9. Im always late for work in the mornings, its my dogs fault.

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10. If they go out now, theyll miss the start of the film.

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11. Weve won lots of awards this year; were Oxfords best company.

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12. There arent many cars Id drive but I like Mazdas, like Peters.

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13. Michelle shouldve caught the half-past eight bus, but she missed it.

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14. He started making the dinner after hed finished writing the report.

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15. If Id known the job was so difficult, I wouldnt have joined.

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TEACHER'S NOTES & KEY

Aim: To check students' understanding and use of apostrophes.

Topics: Various

Timings: Dependent on activity (see below).

Level: 1–8 are elementary level; 9–15 are intermediate level.

This worksheet contains a variety of sentences with missing apostrophes.

The sentences are arranged so that apostrophes of possession and omission are in random order. Some sentences require both kinds, while others include well-chosen 'red-herrings' – students really have to keep their wits about them!

Activities

1 Vary the names (etc) in relevant places to 'personalise' the sentences and make them appropriate for your class. Then, offer the sheet as either a starter or a class activity, with students competing individually, in pairs or in small groups.

2 Display the sheet on the Interactive Whiteboard so that you can mark students' answers together and identify any areas that you might need to go over.

3 Using the sheet as a model, ask students to write their own sentences without the necessary apostrophes. When everyone has written a set number, ask students to swap papers and carefully mark the apostrophes in correctly. This is a good opportunity for discussion between students as they identify correct usage.

4 If you have access to an ICT suite/laptops, students should compose their sentences as a word-processed document. Do the spell checks or grammar checks point pupils towards missing apostrophes?

5 Repeat the above exercise, but this time ask students to produce sentences with superfluous apostrophes! The challenge this time, of course, is to remove the unnecessary punctuation.

Key

1. My best friend's sister is called Jodie.
2. I haven't got my homework.
3. I'd like some coffee and cake.
4. Kim's dance lessons are the best.
5. Henri's goal on Saturday was brilliant.
6. There weren't any eggs left after Jamie dropped the box.
7. "You're my best friend," said Harry.
8. Judy's car isn't very good, it's always breaking down.
9. I'm always late for work in the mornings, it's my dog's/dogs' fault.
10. If they go out now, they'll miss the start of the film.
11. We've won lots of awards this year; we're Oxford's best company.
12. There aren't many cars I'd drive but I like Mazdas, like Peter's.
13. Michelle should've caught the half-past eight bus, but she missed it.
14. He started making the dinner after he'd finished writing the report.
15. If I'd known the job was so difficult, I wouldn't have joined.